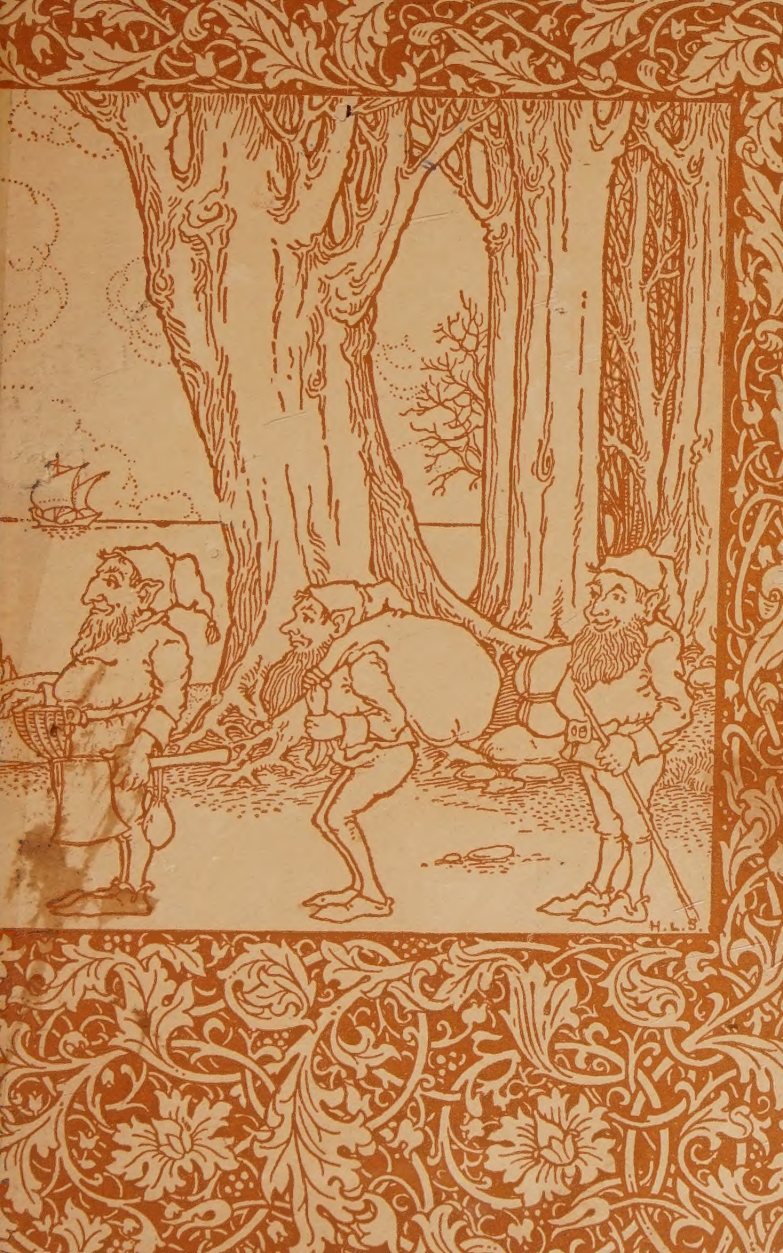
THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

BY CLIFTON JOHNSON

BEDTIME WONDER TALES


H.L.S.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

BEDTIME WONDER TALES

BY

CLIFTON JOHNSON

HOP-O'-MY-THUMB
THE BABES IN THE WOOD
THE BRAVE TIN SOLDIER
THE FOX AND THE LITTLE RED HEN
GOLDEN HAIR AND THE THREE BEARS

CINDERELLA
PUSS IN BOOTS
JACK AND THE BEANSTALK
LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD
THE STORY OF CHICKEN-LICKEN

BLUEBEARD
TOM THUMB
THE PIED PIPER
THE SLEEPING BEAUTY
ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

Other books will be added to the series from time to time.

Michael Nelson

The Prince Finds the Sleeping Princess
(*Page 23*)

BEDTIME WONDER TALES

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

BY

CLIFTON JOHNSON

ILLUSTRATED BY

HARRY L. SMITH

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The books in this series of Bedtime Wonder Tales are made up of favorite stories from the folklore of all nations. Such stories are particularly enjoyed by children from four to twelve years of age. As here told they are free from the savagery, distressing details, and excessive pathos which mar many of the tales in the form that they have come down to us from a barbaric past. But there has been no sacrifice of the simplicity and humor and sweetness that give them perennial charm.

The sources of the stories in this volume are as follows: Page 11, Grimm; 26, France; 39, England; 52, Asia; 75, American Indian; 81, Grimm; 94, Italy; 111, Ireland; 118, South Africa; 122, Brazil.

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THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

AND OTHER FOLKLORE STORIES

I

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

ONCE upon a time, so long ago that even the oldest people now alive cannot remember it, there dwelt a king and queen in a great white marble palace that had splendid halls and high towers, and a golden roof which flashed in the sunlight.

The palace stood in the midst of gardens and pleasure-grounds that extended for miles and miles with their terraces and green lawns and flowers and ancient trees. Peacocks walked about on the lawns, deer loitered in the shady glades, and gold and

silver fish swam in the ponds and fountains.

But in spite of all this beauty the king and queen were not happy, because they had no child. So when at last a little daughter was born to them they were very glad and there were great rejoicings all over the kingdom. Bonfires as big as haystacks were kept burning all night, fat oxen were roasted whole in the market-place of every town, and the church-bells were rung until the ringers were out of breath.

A few weeks later all was bustle and hurry in the palace to make ready for the christening feast. The maids trimmed the halls and chambers with flowers, and sprinkled the floors with sweet-scented leaves and petals. Among the guests invited to the christening were seven powerful fairies. The choicest foods were provided for them, and golden dishes from which to eat.

Just as the feast was going to begin there

was a sudden clashing of brazen claws and a rushing of wings. Something like a black cloud passed before the tall windows and darkened the room. Then the great doors burst open with a terrible bang, and an old fairy with her face almost hidden in a black hood jumped out of a chariot drawn by fierce griffins, and came into the hall.

The king turned pale, and the queen nearly fainted; for this was the spiteful fairy, Tormentilla, who lived alone an immense distance away from everywhere in a dismal black castle in the middle of a desert. The queen in her happiness had forgotten all about her, and so neglected to send her an invitation.

However, another chair was brought for Tormentilla, and she was given a place of honor at the table. All who were present tried to make up for the oversight, but in vain. Nothing pleased her. She would

neither eat nor drink, and sat scowling angrily about her until the feast was over.

Then she and the seven other fairies went to the chamber where the tiny princess lay sleeping in her cradle, and each stepped forward in turn to bestow a magic gift.

The first said, "She shall be as good as gold."

The second said, "She shall be the cleverest princess in the world."

The third said, "She shall be the most beautiful princess in the world."

The fourth said, "She shall be the happiest princess in the world."

The fifth said, "She shall have the sweetest voice that ever was heard."

The sixth said, "She shall be loved by all who know her."

Next the old cross fairy took her place beside the cradle, and shook her cane at the king and queen as she shouted, "And I say

that before the princess reaches the age of twenty she shall prick her hand with a spindle and die of the wound!"

At this the queen fell on her knees and begged Tormentilla to recall her cruel words. But the wicked fairy, without replying, turned and left the hall.

Then the eighth fairy went to the queen and said: "Do not cry, my dear lady; for though I cannot relieve the princess of this enchantment I can make it less severe. She shall not die, but instead she shall sleep for a hundred years. When that time is past, a prince shall come and awaken her with a kiss."

So the king and queen were somewhat comforted, and the fairies returned to their homes.

II

IN THE OLD TOWER

THE greatest care was taken of the little princess, and, in order to save her from her fate, a law was enacted that every spindle in the kingdom should be burned, and no more made.

Life moved along serenely for her until she was eighteen years old. All that the first six fairies promised had come true, and she was the best and cleverest, the most beautiful and the happiest and the sweetest voiced princess in all the world, and everybody loved her. Indeed, by this time Tormentilla's spiteful words were nearly forgotten.

But one morning the king and queen went away to be gone till late in the afternoon,

and the princess amused herself by wandering into the out-of-the-way nooks and corners and attics of the great building. She found dusty furniture that was so quaint it made her laugh, and she found many other curiosities.

At last she climbed a narrow winding stairway in an old tower. It led to a little door with a rusty key sticking out of the lock. She turned the key, opened the door, and there, in a low chamber, sat a white-capped old woman with a spinning-wheel before her on which she was spinning flax. This poor old woman had been allowed to make her home in the tower, many years previous, and it happened that she had never heard the king's command to destroy the spindles; for she was so deaf that if you shouted till you were hoarse she never would have been able to understand you.

The princess stood on the threshold

watching the old woman. This was the first time she had ever seen a spinning-wheel. Presently she said, "What pretty work you are doing, and why does that wheel go whir, whir, whir?"

But of course the old woman did not hear, and she neither answered nor lifted her eyes from her work. So the princess stepped into the room and laid her hand on the old woman's shoulder.

The spinner looked up and rubbed her eyes. "Deary, deary me!" she cried in a high cracked voice, "and who may you be, my pretty darling?"

"I'm the princess!" the maiden screamed in her ear. But the spinner only shook her head. She could hear nothing.

Then the princess pointed to the spindle on which the flax was twirling into thread, and made the old woman understand that she wanted to try spinning.

The spinner nodded and laughed and got up from her seat, and the princess sat down at the wheel. But scarcely had the maiden begun to spin when she pricked her finger with the spindle. Immediately a faintness seized her. She staggered to a bed close by, and as soon as her head touched the pillow she became unconscious.

At the same moment there was a deep silence everywhere in the castle. The little bird that just before had been singing so sweetly on the window-sill hushed its song. The distant hum of voices from the courtyard beneath was stilled. Even the old woman, who had been standing beside her wheel telling the princess how to spin, stopped short in what she was saying, drooped down into her chair, and fell asleep.

In the great hall, the king and queen, who had just returned and were inquiring for

their daughter, fell asleep before the lady-in-waiting could answer them, and the lady herself began to snore. The guards slumbered at their posts. The horses in the stables became motionless, and so did the dogs in the yard, the pigeons on the roof, and the flies on the wall. The fire ceased burning on the kitchen hearth, and the meat on the spit ceased roasting.

In short, sleep fell on the whole palace, and round about the building there sprung up a magic wood. So thick and thorny was this wood, you would think no one could possibly penetrate it, and it hid the entire palace from view except a weather-vane on the roof.

III

THE AWAKENING

TIME went on until a hundred years had passed, and then, one day, a king's son happened to be hunting in the region. He became separated from his attendants in the excitement of the chase and lost his way. At length he came to a woodcutter's cottage and dismounted to ask about the roads.

The old man who lived in the cottage gave him the required information, and in doing so spoke of a thick wood a little farther on in the direction the prince had been riding.

"No one has ever been able to get through that wood," the old man affirmed, "and my grandfather used to say it surrounded a castle in which was a beautiful princess condemned to sleep for a hundred years. He

said some prince would come and awaken her with a kiss. We know there is a building in the wood because, when we are where we can see over the treetops, a weather-vane is in sight."

On hearing this, off went the prince to have a look at the wood. When he found it he tied his horse to a tree intending to attempt to push his way through the thorny thicket on foot. But no sooner did he make a start than the tangled briars of the undergrowth were changed into pretty flowers which parted and bent aside to let him pass.

Presently he reached the palace courtyard and saw the dogs lying asleep, and the pigeons sitting on the roof with their heads under their wings. He went indoors, and there were the flies asleep on the wall, and there was the kitchen boy putting some plums into his mouth and the cook with hand uplifted to box the lad's ears, and a

maid sitting near by with a fowl on her lap ready to pluck.

In the great hall the prince found the whole court asleep, and the king and queen slumbering on their thrones. Everything was so still he could hear his own breathing.

As yet he saw no princess, and he continued looking about till he came to the old tower and ascended the narrow winding stairway. He entered the little room where the princess lay, and she looked so lovely in her sleep that he could not turn away his eyes. After gazing at her a few moments he stooped and kissed her.

Instantly she awoke and said: "O prince, are you here at last? I have had such pleasant dreams!"

She sat up laughing and rubbing her eyes, then stood on her feet, and they went hand in hand out of the room. The old woman, who had also awakened, stared at them in

amazement, and after mumbling a little to herself resumed her spinning.

The two descended the winding stairway, and passed along the corridors until they came to the throne room. There the king and queen and whole court had just waked up and were gazing at each other in wonderment.

The long sleep was ended for the rest of the palace too. Roosters crowed, dogs barked, the cats began to mew, the clocks struck the hours, the heralds blew their trumpets, the pigeons flew away from the roof to the fields, the kitchen fire blazed up, the meat was roasting again, the boy with the plums put them in his mouth, and the cook gave him such a box on the ear that he roared lustily, and the maid began to pluck the fowl.

Everything went on as if there had been no enchantment at all. To be sure, the

dress the princess was wearing was such as the prince's great grandmother might have worn, but that only gave them something to laugh at.

As soon as preparations could be made, the wedding of the prince and princess was celebrated with great splendor, and they lived happily ever after.

IV

PRINCE HYACINTH

ONCE there lived a king who was deeply in love with a princess, but she could not marry any one because she was under an enchantment. So the king went to a fairy and asked what he could do to win the princess for his wife.

The fairy replied: "You know that the princess has a great Tom-cat of which she is very fond. Whoever is clever enough to tread on that cat's tail is the man she is destined to marry."

The king said to himself that this would not be very difficult, and hastened to call on the princess. When the servant opened the door, the cat was there as usual, and walked along ahead of the king into the presence of the lady. The royal visitor took a long step

and thought he had the tail under his foot, but the cat turned round so quickly that he only trod on air.

Thus it was every time he called for eight days, and the king was almost in despair. But the next time he found puss fast asleep with his tail conveniently extended. So the king lost not a moment in setting his foot on it.

The cat sprang up with a terrific yell, and instantly changed into a tall man who fixed his angry eyes on the king, saying: "You have broken the enchantment and can marry the princess, but I will be revenged. You shall have a son who will never win a wife until he finds out that his nose is too long."

The king could not help laughing at this threat, and he said to himself, "If my son's nose is too long surely he must know it through seeing or feeling unless he is blind or without hands."

It did not seem a matter worth worrying about, and he went to seek the princess. They were married soon afterward, but he died the next year.

Meanwhile a son had been born. Hyacinth, as he was called, had the prettiest blue eyes in the world and a sweet little mouth, but, alas! an amazingly long nose. When the queen saw the nose she was at first inconsolable. However, her ladies assured her that it was not really as large as it looked, that it was a Roman nose, and that you had only to open any history to learn that every famous man had a large nose. This pleased the queen, and when she looked at the baby again his nose did not seem quite so large.

The prince was brought up with great care, and as soon as he was old enough to understand he was told all sorts of dreadful stories about people who had short noses.

No one was allowed to come near him whose nose did not more or less resemble his own; and the courtiers, to get into favor with the queen, took to pulling their babies' noses several times every day to make them grow long. But, do what they would, the other youngsters' noses were nothing by comparison with the prince's.

When he began to get an education, his teachers took care to tell him that any great prince or beautiful princess spoken of, had a long nose. His room was hung with pictures, all of people with very long noses; and the prince grew up so convinced that a long nose was a thing of beauty that he would not on any account have had his a single inch shorter.

When his twentieth birthday was past, the queen thought it was time that he should be married, and she had the portraits of several princesses brought for him to see.

Among the rest was a picture of the Dear Little Princess, and the prince thought she was very charming, in spite of her having a little saucy nose. This was a cause of great embarrassment to the courtiers, who had got into such a habit of laughing at little noses that they sometimes found themselves laughing at hers before they had time to think. The prince actually banished two of them who dared to mention disrespectfully the Dear Little Princess's tiny nose.

The others took warning and were more cautious in future. One of them told the prince that though it was quite true that no man could be of any account unless he had a long nose, yet a woman's beauty was a different thing; and he knew a learned man who understood Greek and who had read in some old manuscript that the beautiful Cleopatra herself had a tip-tilted nose.

The prince gave him a splendid present

as a reward for this good news and at once sent ambassadors to ask the Dear Little Princess in marriage. Her father gave his consent, and she started to return with the ambassadors. Prince Hyacinth went three leagues to meet her, but just as he and his escort were about to join her party, an enchanter appeared as suddenly as a flash of lightning, snatched up the Dear Little Princess, and whirled her away out of sight.

Every one was horrified, and the prince was quite inconsolable. He declared that nothing should induce him to go back to his palace until he had found the princess.

V

NOSES LONG AND SHORT

After refusing to allow any of his courtiers to follow him, Prince Hyacinth rode sadly away, letting the horse choose its own course. At length he came to a great plain across which he rode all day long without seeing a single house. Horse and rider were very hungry, when, at nightfall, the prince noticed a light. He rode nearer and found that it shone from a cavern. Inside of the cavern sat a fat little woman who seemed to be at least a hundred years old.

She put on her spectacles to look at the prince, but it was a long time before she could adjust them securely because her nose was so short. When she was able to see him clearly she began to laugh, and exclaimed, "Oh, what a funny nose!"

"Not so funny as your own," Prince Hyacinth retorted. "But never mind about that. My poor horse and I are starving. Will you be good enough to give us something to eat?"

"Certainly," the old woman said. "Although your nose is so ridiculous, you are the son of my best friend. I am a fairy whom he often came to consult. *He* had a very handsome nose."

"And pray what does mine lack?" the prince asked.

"Oh! it doesn't lack anything," the fairy replied. "On the contrary, there is a great deal too much of it. But never mind; one may be a very worthy man even if his nose is too long. I should like to tell you—"

"Madam," the prince interrupted, "I beg of you to remember that I have had nothing to eat today."

"Yes, I certainly was forgetting," the

fairy acknowledged. "Come in and I will give you some supper, and while you are eating I will tell you in a few words about my acquaintance with your father. That's my way—to tell what I have to tell in a few words and not drone along endlessly."

The prince was getting quite angry at the delay in providing food, but it seemed best that he should be polite, and he remarked, "I know that in the pleasure of listening to you I should forget my own hunger, yet my horse, who cannot understand you, must be fed."

"You shall not wait another minute," the fairy declared. "I must say, in spite of the enormous size of your nose that you are very agreeable."

"Plague take the old lady!" the prince thought. "How she does go on about my nose! If I were not so hungry I would soon have done with this chatterpie who thinks

she talks very little. How stupid people are not to see their own faults! She has been spoiled by flatterers, who have made her believe that she is a very moderate talker. I will never be deceived that way. I know my own faults, I hope."

Poor Prince Hyacinth! He really believed what he said, and had not the faintest suspicion that the people who had praised his nose were laughing at him.

Meanwhile the servants were putting the supper on the table, and soon he and the fairy sat down together to eat. His hunger was just beginning to be appeased when the fairy said: "My dear prince, might I beg you to move a little farther away? Your nose casts such a shadow that I cannot see what I have on my plate. Dear me! how long your nose is! I seem unable to get used to it."

"Really, madam," the prince said, "I

wish you would stop mentioning my nose. Why should you care what it is like? I am quite satisfied with it and have no wish that it should be shorter."

"I didn't mean to vex you," the fairy responded, "but I can't help being shocked by such a nose. To tell the truth, it would make three ordinary ones."

No sooner did the prince appease his appetite than he became so impatient at the fairy's continual remarks about his nose that he got on his horse and rode away. But no matter where he went in his journeyings he found that his nose attracted curious and unfavorable notice. He thought the people were crazy, for he had been so used to hearing his nose called handsome that he could not imagine it was otherwise.

The old fairy, who wished to make him happy, finally hit on a plan for doing so. She shut the Dear Little Princess up in a

palace of crystal, and put this palace where the prince soon found it. He was overjoyed to see the princess again, and he tried with all his might to get into the palace, but utterly failed. He could speak to her, yet nowhere was there an opening that allowed her to put out more than her face, and when he tried to kiss her his long nose prevented it. For the first time he realized that his nose was not altogether beautiful and desirable.

"Well, it must be admitted that my nose is too long," he said.

The moment these words were spoken the crystal palace vanished, and the old fairy appeared hand in hand with the Dear Little Princess. She led her to Prince Hyacinth, and said: "Now you shall have this lady. You might have had her before if you had shown more sense. Much good it did for me to talk to you about your nose! You

would never have found out how extraordinary it was if it hadn't hindered you from doing what you wanted to do. When you acknowledged that it was too long it became just like other people's."

Prince Hyacinth did not fail to profit by the lesson he had received. He returned with the Dear Little Princess to his kingdom, where they were married and lived happily ever after.

VI

THE NORROWAY BULL

In Norroway, long ago, there lived a certain lady who had three daughters.

One day the oldest daughter said, "Mother, bake me a bannock and roast me a piece of meat, for I'm going away to seek my fortune."

Her mother did as her daughter wished. Then the girl went away to an old witch washerwoman and told what she intended to do.

The old witch bade her stay there a few days looking out of her back door to see what she could see.

She saw nothing the first day. The second day she watched again and saw nothing. But on the third day she saw a coach drawn by six horses coming along the road. She

told the old witch what she saw, and the witch said, "That coach is for you."

So the girl got into it and it went away with her.

Not long afterward the second daughter said to her mother, "Mother, bake me a bannock and roast me a piece of meat, for I'm going away to seek my fortune."

Her mother did so, and off went the girl to the old witch as her sister had done. The witch told her to watch from the back door, and on the third day she saw a coach drawn by four horses coming along the road.

"That is for you," the old witch said.

So the girl got into the coach and was carried away in it.

"Mother," the third daughter said, "bake me a bannock and roast me a piece of meat, for I'm going away to seek my fortune."

Her mother baked the bannock and roasted the meat, and the daughter took

them and went off to the house of the old witch. She was bidden to look out of the back door; and for two days she looked out and saw nothing, but on the third day she saw a great black bull coming crooning along the road.

She told the old witch what she had seen, and the witch said, "Well, that is for you."

On hearing this the girl was nearly distracted with grief and terror, but the old witch lifted her up, set her on the bull's back, and away he went with her.

They traveled and they traveled until they came in sight of a very big and bonny castle. "Yonder we must stay this night," the bull said. "In that castle dwells my oldest brother."

Presently they were at the castle, and the servants lifted her off his back. They escorted her in, and sent the bull away to a pasture for the night. When morning came

they took the girl into a fine shining parlor and gave her a beautiful apple.

"Do not break it," they said, "until you are in the greatest trouble that ever beset any one in the world. Then the apple will save you."

The bull was now brought from the pasture, and she was lifted on his back. When she had ridden a long, long way they came to another bonny castle, and the bull said to her: "Yonder we must stay this night. That castle belongs to my second brother."

As soon as they reached the castle the servants lifted her down, escorted her in, and sent the bull to a field for the night. The next morning they took the lady into a fine and rich room, and gave her the most beautiful pear she had ever seen. "Do not break it," they said, "till you are in the greatest trouble that ever mortal could be in, and the pear will save you."

Riding on the Black Bull's Back

Again the bull was brought and she was lifted up onto his back. Away they went, and she rode till they came in sight of the biggest and finest castle they had seen. "We must stop at yonder castle tonight," the bull said. "It belongs to my youngest brother."

They were soon there, and the servants took her in and sent the bull to a field. In the morning she was shown into a fine room and was given a plum. "Do not break it," the servants said, "till you are in the greatest trouble that a mortal could be in, and the plum will save you."

Then they brought the bull, set her on his back, and away the two went. They traveled on and on a long time until they came to a dark and ugsome glen. There they stopped, and the lady alighted.

"Here you must stay," the bull said, "while I go and fight the Old One. Seat

yourself on that stone and move neither hand nor foot till I come back, else I shall never find you again. If everything around you turns red you will know that the Old One has beaten me. But should all things turn blue you can be sure that I have conquered him. Then I shall return to you in my proper form as a duke and there will be an end of the enchantment that has given me the form of a black bull."

She sat down on the stone, and by and by everything around her turned blue. That meant her companion was victorious, and she was overcome with joy. Without thinking, she lifted one of her feet and crossed it over the other. So when the duke came and sought for the lass he could not find her.

VII

A WANDERER

THE maiden sat on the stone a long time, and she wept till she was weary. At last she rose and went away, she knew not whither. On she wandered through many dreadful forests and lonely wastes until she came to a great hill of glass. So she walked along at the foot of the hill sobbing and seeking a passage over.

Finally she came to a blacksmith's house, and the blacksmith promised to make her a pair of iron shoes with which she could climb over the glass hill, but first she must serve him for seven years. So she was his servant for seven years.

Then she got the iron shoes and climbed to the top of the glass hill and descended on

the other side. She continued her journey until she lost her way one day as she was going through a dark wood. Night was coming on, and she thought she must die of cold and hunger.

But presently she saw a light and hastened toward it. She found that it shone from the window of the old witch washerwoman's house, and when she rapped at the door, the old witch came to see who was there. The witch did not remember her, and the girl did not tell who she was, but let it be thought that she was a stranger damsel in need of work.

So she was taken in as a servant. Not long afterward the witch told her of a gallant young duke who had brought some clothes there to wash about seven years before. The clothes were covered with blood, and whoever washed them clean was to be the young duke's wife. The old witch set

her daughter at the task, and day after day the girl had washed until she was tired, but she could not remove a single stain.

Now they put the stranger damsel at the washing, and at once the stains came out and left the clothes pure and clean.

A little later the young duke came to inquire if the clothes were ready for him. The old witch showed him that they were clean and made him believe that her daughter did the washing. A wedding day was appointed, and meanwhile he stayed at the witch's house.

The stranger damsel was distracted at the thought of his marrying another, for she fell deeply in love with the gallant young duke. Finally on the day selected for the wedding, she bethought herself of her apple. She broke it and found it filled with precious jewelry, the richest she had ever seen.

"All this will I give to you," she said to

the witch's daughter, "on condition that you put off your marriage for one day and let me spend the night at the door of the duke's room."

The witch's daughter consented, but her mother prepared a sleeping drink for the duke. He drank it and never wakened till the next morning. All night long the damsel at the door sobbed and sang:

"Seven years I served for you,
The glassy hill I climbed for you,
The bloody clothes I washed for you,
Will you not wake and turn to me?"

Next day she knew not what to do for grief. Then she broke the pear and found it filled with jewelry far richer than the contents of the apple. This jewelry served to obtain another day's delay of the wedding and permission to be a second night at the door of the duke's room.

But the witch gave him a sleeping drink as she had before, and he again slept till morning. All night the damsel vainly sighed and sang:

"Seven years I served for you,
The glassy hill I climbed for you,
The bloody clothes I washed for you,
Will you not wake and turn to me?"

When morning came she had nearly lost hope, and she broke her plum. It held richer jewelry than even the pear, and with it she bargained as before.

That day, while the young duke went hunting in the forest, his servant said to him, "What is the singing and moaning I heard for the last two nights just outside of your chamber?"

"I didn't hear anything of the sort," the duke responded.

But he was assured that it was no joke

nor a fancy of his informant, and he resolved to keep awake that night and see if the same thing occurred again. When evening came the old witch brought him a cup of water into which she had put a sleeping powder. He told her he did not care to drink the water unless it was sweetened.

While she went for some honey, he poured out the sleeping drink and refilled the cup with water. Then the witch came, stirred honey into the water, and he drank it.

After every one had gone to bed, the stranger damsel came to the door of the duke's chamber thinking that this might be the last chance she would have to win him. Her heart was like to break as she sang:

"Seven years I served for you,
The glassy hill I climbed for you,
The bloody clothes I washed for you,
Will you not wake and turn to me?"

He heard and he let her into the room. Then she told him all that had befallen in the past seven years, and he told her all that had happened to him.

That very night they left the house of the old witch, and the next day they married. The duke took her to his castle, and there they are living happy to this day, so far as I know.

VIII

THE GARDENER'S SON

ONCE upon a time there lived a king whose palace was surrounded by a spacious garden. But though the gardeners were many and the soil was good, the garden yielded neither flowers nor fruits, and not even grass or shady trees.

The king was in despair about it when a wise old man said to him: "Your gardeners do not understand their business, but what else can you expect of them? Their fathers were cobblers and carpenters. You should have a gardener whose father and grandfather have been gardeners before him. Then your garden will very soon be full of green grass and gay flowers, and you will enjoy its delicious fruit."

So the king sent messengers to every town and village in his dominions to look for a gardener whose forefathers had been gardeners. After forty days one was found.

"Come with us and be the king's gardener," they said.

"But I have only these poor clothes that I am wearing and am too shabby to go with you," he objected.

"Don't trouble yourself about that," they told him. "We will furnish new clothes for you and your family."

"But I owe money to several people," he added.

"We will pay your debts," they said.

So he was persuaded to go to the king, and he took his wife and son with him. The king was delighted to secure such a gardener, and the man had no difficulty in making the royal garden produce flowers and fruit. At the end of a year it was not like

the same place, and the king showered gifts on his new servant.

The gardener's son was a very handsome young man with most agreeable manners, and every day he carried the best fruit of the garden to the king, and the prettiest flowers to his daughter. This princess was wonderfully pretty, and as she had reached the age of eighteen the king was beginning to think that it was time for her to marry.

"My dear," he said to her one day, "I am considering marrying you to the son of my prime minister."

"Father," the princess responded, "I will never marry the son of the prime minister."

"Why not?" the king asked.

"Because I love the gardener's son," the princess answered.

On hearing this the king was very angry at first, then he wept and sighed, and declared that such a low-born husband was not

worthy of her. But the young princess told him that she intended to marry the gardener's son and no one else.

So the king consulted his ministers, and they said: "This is what you must do to get rid of the troublesome youth. Send him and the other suitor to a distant country, promising that the one who returns first shall marry your daughter."

In accord with this advice, preparations for the contest were immediately begun. The prime minister's son was presented with a splendid horse and a purse full of gold pieces, while the gardener's son had only an old lame horse, and the money in his purse was copper.

The day before they started the princess met her lover and gave him some jewels saying: "Take these and make the best use of them you can. Be brave and come back quickly."

The two suitors left the town together, but the prime minister's son went off at a gallop on his good horse and soon was lost to sight in the distance. After traveling for several days he stopped to let his steed drink at a spring beside which a ragged old woman sat on a stone.

"Good-day to you, young traveler," she said.

But the youth did not reply, and she added: "Have pity on me. I am dying of hunger. Three days have I been here, and no one has given me anything."

"Don't bother me, you old witch," the young man cried. "I can do nothing for you."

His horse had finished drinking, and away he rode.

Later the gardener's son arrived at the spring on his lame horse, and when the beg-

gar woman greeted him he made a friendly response.

Then she said, "Young traveler, have pity on me."

"Take my purse," he responded, "and I will carry you to some village or town if you wish, for you seem too weak to walk."

The old woman didn't wait to be asked twice, but mounted behind him, and in this style they reached the chief city of a powerful kingdom. The prime minister's son was there lodged in a grand inn, but the gardener's son and the old woman dismounted at the cheapest inn they could find.

IX

A CURE FOR THE KING

When the lodgers at the cheap inn were eating breakfast the next morning they heard a great noise in the street, and the king's heralds passed blowing all kinds of instruments, and crying: "Our master is old and infirm. He will give a rich reward to whoever will restore to him the strength of his youth."

Then the old woman said to her companion: "This is what you must do to obtain the reward which the king promises. Here is a little vial that contains a magic potion. Carry it to the palace and cry out before the door: 'I am a celebrated physician from Albania, and I can restore the king's youth.' When you are brought into the presence of

the king, induce him to drink the contents of the vial, and he will become just as he was at the age of twenty. For your reward you must demand a bronze ring which is one of his treasures, and which has the power to grant you everything that you desire."

The young man at once hastened to the palace and called out as the old woman had directed. At first the king's physicians laughed at the unknown wayfarer, but the king ordered that he should be admitted. His Majesty drank the contents of the vial and found himself once more young and hearty.

"How can I reward you, my benefactor?" he cried. "Will you take half my treasures?"

"No," the gardener's son replied.

"Will you marry my daughter?" the king asked.

"No," the youth said.

"Will you accept half my kingdom?" was the king's next question.

"No," the youth answered. "Give me only the bronze ring which can instantly grant me anything I ask for."

"Alas!" the king said, "I would rather part with almost anything else. Nevertheless, you shall have it." And he gave it to him.

The gardener's son went back to the inn and said to the ring: "Prepare a splendid ship in which I may continue my journey. Let the hull be of gold, the masts of silver, and the sails of silk, and let the crew consist of young men richly dressed and of noble appearance. As to the cargo, let it be of diamonds, rubies, and emeralds."

Immediately the ship was ready for him in the harbor, and he went on board and sailed away. After a time he arrived at a large city and established himself in a won-

derful palace. A few days later he met his rival, the prime minister's son, who had spent all his money and was reduced to the disagreeable employment of a street cleaner.

The gardener's son said to him, "Who are you, and from what country do you come?"

"I am the son of the prime minister of a great nation," the other replied, "and yet see what a degraded occupation I am reduced to."

"Listen to me," the gardener's son said. "I am willing to help you. I will give you a ship to take you back to your own country on condition that you allow yourself to be branded on the back as my slave."

"I am ready to do anything rather than stay as I am," the prime minister's son declared.

"Then follow me to my palace," the rich stranger said.

When they arrived there the gardener's son had his servants heat his bronze ring and brand the other young man on the back with it.

Afterward he said to the ring in his private apartment: "Bronze ring, obey your master. Prepare a shabby old tub of a ship. Paint it black, furnish it with ragged sails, and man it with infirm and sickly sailors."

The prime minister's son embarked in this vessel and at length reached his own country, where he was joyfully received in spite of his pitiable condition.

"I am the first of your daughter's suitors to return," he said to the king. "Now fulfil your promise and give me the princess in marriage."

Preparations for the wedding festivities were begun at once, much to the anger and sorrow of the poor princess.

X

THE RIVAL LOVERS

THE next morning, at daybreak, a wonderful ship with every sail set entered the harbor and anchored before the town. The king happened to see it from a palace window, and he cried, "What strange ship is this that has a golden hull, silver masts, and silken sails, and such handsome, well-dressed sailors?"

Then he ordered his servants to invite the captain of the ship to come to the palace. The captain soon arrived and he proved to be an enchanting young prince whose costly clothing was adorned with many pearls and diamonds.

"Sir," the king said, "you are welcome,

whoever you may be. Do me the favor to be my guest as long as you remain in my capital."

"Many thanks," the captain responded, "I accept your offer."

While they were talking, the princess and her betrothed came in, and the king told the captain that they were soon to marry.

"Why, how is this!" the young captain cried. "Surely you will not allow your charming daughter to marry such a man."

"He is my prime minister's son," the king said.

"What of that?" the captain commented. "He is one of my slaves. I met him in a distant town, reduced to carrying away dust and rubbish from the houses. I had pity on him and took him into my service."

"Impossible!" the king exclaimed.

"I can prove it," the captain declared. "He returned in a ship I fitted out for him.

It had a black, battered hull, and the sailors were infirm and sickly."

"That is quite true," the king acknowledged.

"Your Majesty," the young captain said, "have the back of your daughter's betrothed laid bare, and you will find him branded with my ring."

The king was about to give this order when the prime minister's son confessed that all was as his rival had related.

"Oh, joy!" the princess cried, running forward and grasping the stranger's hand. "You are the gardener's son, whom I love, and it is you I wish to marry."

"Young man, you shall be my son-in-law," the king said. "The arrangements for the wedding are almost completed, and you shall marry my daughter this very day."

So the gardener's son married the beau-

tiful princess, and for several months the young couple were as happy as happy could be, while the king was more and more pleased with himself for having secured such a son-in-law. Then the captain of the golden ship went off on a long voyage.

In the outskirts of the capital there lived a Jew who had spent his life in studying black arts. He had found out that the gardener's son had only succeeded in marrying the princess by the help of his bronze ring. "I will have that ring," he said.

Without delay he went and caught some little red fishes in the sea. Back he came carrying them alive in a glass bowl and passed before the princess's window crying, "Who wants some pretty little red fishes?"

The princess heard him and sent one of her women slaves, who said to the Jew, "What will you take for your fish?"

"A bronze ring," he replied.

"A bronze ring!" the servant cried. "Where shall I find one?"

"Under the cushion in the princess's chair," he told her.

The slave went back to her mistress and said: "The old madman will take neither gold nor silver for his fishes. He wants a bronze ring which he says is hidden under the cushion in your chair."

"Find the ring and give it to him," the princess ordered.

The slave found the ring, which the captain of the golden ship had accidentally left behind, and carried it to the Jew.

He instantly hurried off, and when he reached home said: "Bronze ring, obey your master. I desire that the golden ship shall turn to black wood, and the crew to negroes, and that the cargo shall be black cats."

His order was obeyed, and when the

young captain found himself on the sea in this miserable condition he lamented his misfortune loudly. "Alas!" he cried, "some one must have stolen my bronze ring, and whoever has taken it has probably taken my wife also. What would I gain by going back to my own country?"

So he sailed about from island to island, until his poverty was so great that he and his crew and the black cats had nothing to eat but herbs and roots. At length he reached an island inhabited by mice. There he landed and began to explore. Mice were everywhere and nothing but mice. Some of the cats followed him and they were so hungry that they made terrible havoc among the little creatures.

XI

HELP FROM THE MICE

THE queen of the mice held a council to consider the situation. "These cats will eat every one of us," she declared, "if the captain of the ship does not shut up the ferocious animals. Let us send to him a deputation of the bravest of us."

Several mice offered themselves for this mission and went to the young captain. "Sir," they said, "go away quickly from our island with your cats or we shall all perish."

"I will go gladly," he told them, "provided you first bring me a bronze ring which somebody has stolen from me. If you do not do this I shall land all my cats on your island and exterminate you."

The mice withdrew and reported to the queen. "What shall we do?" she asked in great dismay. "How can we find this ring?"

Again she held a council to which she summoned mice from every quarter of the globe. None of the earlier arrivals knew anything about the bronze ring. The last to come were three mice, one of whom was blind, the second lame, and the third had lost its tail.

"Ho, ho, ho!" they said, "we are from a far distant country."

"Do you know where the bronze ring is that supplies its possessor with everything for which he wishes," the queen asked.

"Ho, ho, ho!" they laughed, "a wicked Jew has it. He keeps it in his pocket by day and in his mouth by night."

"Go and take it from him," the queen ordered, "and come back as soon as possible."

The three mice wasted no time in setting

sail for the Jew's country. When they reached the capital the blind mouse was left to take care of the boat while the other two landed and ran to where the Jew lived. Night came and he went to bed and to sleep with the bronze ring in his mouth.

"Now what shall we do?" the two little animals asked each other.

The lame mouse found a cup of oil and a bottle of pepper. Then it dipped its tail in the oil and next in the pepper. After that it held the tail to the Jew's nose.

"Atisha, atisha!" he sneezed, and the shock made the bronze ring jump from his mouth. But he did not wake, and, quick as thought, the mouse without a tail snatched up the precious talisman and carried it off to the boat.

Imagine the despair of the magician when he awoke and the bronze ring was nowhere to be found! By that time the three mice

had set sail with their prize, and a favoring breeze carried them toward the island where the queen of the mice awaited them. Very naturally they began to discuss the ring, and the question was asked, which deserved the most credit in getting it.

"I do," the blind mouse declared, "for without my care of our boat while you two were at the Jew's house it would have drifted away to the open sea."

"No, no!" the lame mouse cried, "the credit is mine. Did I not cause the Jew to sneeze the ring out of his mouth?"

"Indeed!" the mouse without a tail exclaimed, "the honor is due me, for I ran off with the ring."

From high words they soon came to blows, and alas! in the fierceness of the quarrel the bronze ring fell into the sea.

"How are we to face our queen?" they

groaned. "By our folly we have lost the talisman and she and her people on the island will be utterly destroyed. We cannot return to them. Near at hand is a desert island. Let us go on shore and there end our miserable lives."

So they sailed into a little cove and landed. The blind mouse was speedily deserted by the other two who went off to hunt flies. As it wandered sadly along the beach it found a dead fish, which it began to eat. Suddenly its teeth met on something hard, and it called to the other two mice.

They came running, and the blind mouse said, "I have found the bronze ring in this dead fish."

"Yes, it is the talisman!" the others cried joyfully, and the three got into the boat and sailed to the mouse island.

They arrived none too soon, for the cap-

tain was just going to land his cargo of cats when a deputation of mice brought him the precious bronze ring.

"Bronze ring, obey your master," the young man commanded. "Restore my ship as it was before."

Immediately the old black vessel became the wonderful golden ship with sails of silk, and the handsome sailors quickly had the craft bounding over the billows toward the capital.

Ah! how merrily the sailors sang as they were wafted along on the blue sea. At last the port was reached. The captain hastened to the palace, and there he found the princess, and they told each other all that had happened. Ever afterward they lived happily to the end of their days.

Coyote and the Turtle Agree to Race

XII

THE RACERS

One afternoon a coyote met a turtle. The turtle was hitching along in the unsteady walk that turtles have, and the coyote said, "You are the slowest and most awkward traveler I ever saw."

The turtle was very well aware that he was a slow coach, but it vexed him to be taunted with his defect. So he spoke up loudly and scornfully, saying: "You don't know what you are talking about, Coyote. Why, I can beat *you* running."

The coyote's response was a loud laugh which irritated the turtle still more. "Yes, I can beat you running," the turtle repeated boastfully; "and if you don't believe it, race

with me and I'll prove to you that I am right."

The turtle knew he was no match for the swift-footed coyote in a contest of this kind, but it so disturbed him to be laughed at that he had spoken with more haste than judgment.

"Pooh!" the coyote said. "We'll see about that. Tomorrow we'll run a race. We'll start from this ant-hill and go to that big stump at the edge of the wood. But by the time you've crawled a rod, if you'll stand up on your hind legs and turn your woggle eyes in that direction, you'll see me waiting for you at the stump."

The turtle couldn't say no to this, and they parted with the race agreed on. That night, after the turtle reached home, he was so worried that he couldn't sleep.

"I wonder now that I talked such folly," he said. "Coyote is a natural racer while

I can't even walk fast. However, I am in for it, and since I cannot beat him with my legs I'll have to do it with my wits."

The coyote slept soundly, for he was sure he would win. But the turtle lay awake all night studying out what he should do. It was growing light in the east before he made up his mind.

Early in the morning he went to some other turtles and said: "Brothers, Coyote and I are to run a race today. If you will help me, I know how we can fool him and take some of the brag out of him. I want each of you to dig a hole along the course we are to run and take his station a few yards back of it. Each in turn, as he sees Coyote coming, must run as hard as he can till Coyote has passed him, and then hide in his hole."

The scheme was loudly applauded, for the whole turtle tribe feel humiliated at the

way they have to bungle along on their land journeys. "It will be a good thing to teach Coyote a little modesty," all agreed.

A dozen of the turtle youngsters wanted to have part in the fun, but the turtle said: "That will not do. I appreciated your willingness, but my helpers must be full grown just as I am so Coyote will think we are all one person."

Three old turtles volunteered to do what he required, and off they went with him. The turtle himself traveled to the ant-hill. Two of the others each dug a hole at intervals along the course and then each stationed himself a little to the rear of his hole. The third went to the stump.

Pretty soon the coyote came prancing and capering to the ant-hill, very happy in his confidence that he would win the race. He and the turtle got ready to start, and the turtle shouted, "One, two, three, go-o!"

The coyote dashed off and the turtle crawled back of the ant-hill out of sight.

When the coyote loped over the first ridge, what was his amazement to see the turtle ambling along ahead of him! He didn't know what to make of it, but he put on all the speed that was in his nimble legs and soon passed the plodder. No sooner was the coyote safely by than the turtle popped into his hole.

On went the coyote fairly flying, but when he mounted another ridge there was the turtle ahead of him again. "What can this mean?" he thought. "I never saw a turtle run like that before. The fellow must have magic in him."

He rushed down the slope like mad and quickly got ahead of this turtle also. Then the turtle crawled into the ground.

"Now I've seen the last of my rival," the coyote said to himself.

He ran his utmost, but when he got to the end of the course, behold! there was the turtle sitting calmly on the stump waiting for him.

The turtle had a blanket which he pulled closer round his shoulders as he said: "It's a cold morning. A little run like this hardly gets my blood warm."

The coyote was out of breath and dripping with sweat. "How in the mischief did you go so fast?" he gasped. He did not wait for an answer, but crept off into the brush and lay down.

The race was over and the turtles went home chuckling. After that the coyote hadn't anything more to say to them about being slow.

XIII

A HUNTER'S MAGIC GUN

ONCE upon a time there was a young lad who left his home and went forth into the world to seek his fortune. After he had journeyed a long way he met a huntsman dressed in green. "Whence do you come, and whither are you going?" the huntsman asked.

The youth told where he came from, but as to where he was going—that was more than he knew.

"Would you not like to stop with me and be my pupil and learn to shoot?" the huntsman questioned.

"That would suit me exactly," the youth replied, and he went with the huntsman and abode with him several years and learned the art of hunting.

At last he got permission to depart, and the huntsman gave him a gun which would miss nothing at which it was fired. With this gift he went off, and by and by entered a large forest. Night came while he was still in the woodland, but before the gloom became so dense that he could not see he climbed a lofty tree and perched himself among its branches to avoid any prowling wild beasts.

Toward midnight he thought he saw a light glimmering at a distance, and he peeped through the boughs to mark more exactly where it was. "Some house is over there," he said, "or at least some hunter's camp. I will go to it in the morning"; and he took off his hat and threw it in that direction to serve as a guide.

At the first gleam of day he descended from the tree, got his hat, and walked straight on. Soon he began to see the light

again, and the farther he went the larger the light appeared. When he got nearly to it he discovered that it was caused by a great bonfire around which three giants were sitting. They were watching the roasting of an ox that was hung on a spit above the fire. One of the giants got up and said, "I will taste the meat and see if it is done enough."

He cut off a piece and was going to put it in his mouth when the huntsman shot it out of his hand.

"What a gust of wind that was!" the giant exclaimed. "It took the meat right out of my grasp."

He cut off another piece and was about to bite it when the huntsman shot that away also. Then the giant concluded that one of his comrades, and not the wind, was playing tricks on him, and he gave the giant who was nearest a box on the ear. "Why do you snatch my meat away?" he cried angrily.

"It was not I," the other declared. "Some sharpshooter must be lurking near, and he is having sport with us."

The giant took a third piece of meat, but he could not hold it. The huntsman shot it away. "That fellow must be a good marksman," the giant said. "A man who can shoot away the food from one's mouth in such a fashion would be useful to us."

Then he raised his voice and called: "Come, you sharpshooter! Sit down by our fire and eat till you are satisfied, and we will do you no harm. But if you do not come we will go and find you, and this day will be your last."

When the huntsman heard these words he stepped up to the fire and said, "I am a trained hunter, and I can shoot so well that whatever I aim at I hit."

"Keep company with us and you will be well treated," the giants told him. "We

want just such a trained hunter as you are to help us. Beyond this forest is a lake, and on the other side of the lake is a royal palace with a strong tower close by, in which the king has his daughter stay to keep us from carrying her off. We could steal her away in the night if it were not for a little dog who is on guard just outside of the tower. He begins to bark as soon as any one comes near, and that wakes up everybody in the palace. We want you to shoot the dog."

"That will be mere play," the hunter said.

XIV

THE PLOT THAT FAILED

THE next day the giants took the hunter to a ship they had on the lake and sailed across. They kept out of sight of the palace and landed just before dark where an outjutting point hid them. Then they went cautiously forward in the direction of the tower. As they approached it the little dog came running toward them, and would have barked, but the hunter aimed his gun and shot the dog dead.

The giants rejoiced and thought that now they had the princess for certain. They waited until about the middle of the night and then stole up to within a stone's throw of the tower. There the giants agreed to remain while the youth went inside to

see how the capture of the princess was to be accomplished.

When he entered the tower he walked from room to room and found everybody fast asleep. At last he came to where the king's daughter lay, and she was so beautiful that he stood looking at her, enchanted. "How can I deliver such a maiden into the power of those evil giants?" he thought.

Beside the bed he spied a pair of slippers. Each had a star on it and was marked with the king's name. He also observed that the corner of the bed coverlet had the king's name on it done in golden threads, and that the princess's name was worked in silver threads on the corner of a handkerchief that lay on her pillow.

"Some tokens that I have been here without disturbing the princess may be useful in the future," he thought, and he took his knife and cut off the name corner of the

coverlet and handkerchief and put them and one of the slippers in his knapsack.

"I must destroy those wretched giants and save this beautiful princess," he murmured.

Above the door hung a sword of pure silver with the king's name engraved on its hilt. The youth had never before seen so fine a sword, and he took it down and hung it at his side. Then he noiselessly left the room, opened a window in the hall and called softly to the giants. They came and he whispered, "Creep in at this window."

But as soon as the first one poked in his head the hunter seized him by the hair and cut his head off with the sword. Then he pulled the giant's body in, called to the second giant, and served him likewise. The third giant shared the same fate.

The king had promised his daughter in marriage to any man who should destroy

the giants, but of that the hunter knew nothing, and he left the tower and went away to ramble again about the world.

When the king came to his daughter's tower the next morning and saw three giants lying dead in the hall, he ran to his daughter's room in great alarm. He was much relieved to find her unharmed, and asked her who had killed the giants.

"I know not, dear father," she replied. "I have been asleep all night."

As soon as she arose she observed that a corner of her handkerchief and a corner of the coverlet had been cut off and that one of her slippers and the sword which had hung above the door were gone. She wondered about all this, but was not able to solve the mystery.

Right after breakfast the king had his soldiers and the whole court assemble and asked who had slain the giants.

A one-eyed, crooked-nosed captain stepped forward and said, "Your Majesty, I killed them."

"Very well," the king responded, "then you shall marry the princess in accord with my promise."

"No, no!" the maiden exclaimed, "rather than marry him I will go forth from this palace a vagabond to wander wherever my feet may carry me."

"You can do as you choose," the king told her. "Either marry this brave captain to whom you owe so much, or exchange your royal clothes for peasant's garments and depart."

So she put on coarse peasant's clothes and went away. Sometimes she got work to do, and sometimes she had to beg for food and shelter. Once a potter let her take a crate of earthenware to sell in the market-place

of a neighboring town, but while she sat at a corner of the market with her goods displayed before her a heavy wagon drove right over the earthenware and smashed it to bits. The potter would not trust her with any more.

Soon after this misfortune she wandered into a forest, and in its midst came to a cottage. She was hungry, and she stopped to ask for something to eat.

A young hunter answered her rap at the door, invited her to come in, and placed some food on the table for her. It happened that he was the very same skilful hunter who had killed the giants, and he had the sword with which he slew them buckled at his side. She noticed her father's name on the hilt and asked him where he got it.

So he told his story and showed her the

slipper he had taken from her room and the pieces he had cut from her handkerchief and coverlet.

When he finished she said: "I am the princess who was asleep in the tower that night. My father had promised me as a wife to whoever slew the giants, and he was going to have me marry a one-eyed, scrawny old captain who said he killed them. I refused to have such a scarecrow for my husband and was turned out of the palace a beggar."

"Perhaps we could set things right if we returned," the hunter suggested—"that is, if you would marry me."

She looked at him out of the corner of her eyes and said, "I think I would rather have you than that horrid captain."

So they tramped back to the castle together, and they were so happy on the way that they were agreed in thinking the road

was not half long enough. The princess went to the king and declared that the hunter was her real deliverer, and when the youth was called in and showed the sword and other tokens he had carried away, the king could not doubt his daughter's story.

"Have that false one-eyed captain put into prison!" he shouted; "and then let every one get to work and hasten preparations for a grand wedding."

The wedding was presently celebrated, and the skilful hunter married the beautiful princess, and after the old king died he ascended the throne.

XV

THREE GIFTS

THERE were once three brothers who lived so happily in their village that they never thought of leaving it until they had grown to be young men. Then their grandmother died and left each of them a legacy. But poor enough the inheritance seemed. Carlo got an empty purse, Gaetano a whistle, and Chekino an old cloak.

"Much richer we'll be!" they said.

"Ah!" Carlo cried, "I wish this purse was full of goldpieces."

At once the purse in his hand bulged so that it seemed ready to burst. He opened it. Sure enough, the purse was full of goldpieces.

"Oh!" the others exclaimed, "you're well provided for at any rate."

Gaetano blew his whistle. In a twinkling a great company of men-at-arms stood before him, saluting and waiting for his orders.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"Your servants to command," they answered.

"Well," he said, "I don't know what to do with you just now, but I may find a use for you some day."

Again he blew on the whistle and they vanished. He marveled greatly and dreamed of being a famous captain.

"Perhaps I'd better try on the shabby cloak," Chekino said. He did so, and disappeared from sight.

"Where have you gone?" his brothers asked.

"I haven't gone. I'm here," he told them.

"No, you're not," they said.

"I am," he declared. Then he let the cloak slip from his shoulders and was plainly to be seen.

"This is a strange gift," he said. "I may find it very helpful sometime. Probably we had better say nothing about these magic things of ours at present." To this the others agreed.

Soon afterward Carlo went to the town. He had an abundance of money and spent it so freely that rumor began to credit him with being the richest man in the world. What did it matter to him how lavish he was? Just a wish, if he emptied his purse, and it was full again! The news of his wealth reached the princess, and she sent for him.

He went to the palace, greatly elated, and was most graciously entertained. The princess was soon convinced that he had plenty of money, and no matter how much

he used he would assure her mysteriously, "There is more where that came from."

He was only a rough countryman, yet she pretended to admire him very much, and in a few weeks she had promised to marry him. After that Carlo thought it was quite safe to tell her the secret of his fortune. He even allowed her to take the purse. Then she saw to it that he was decoyed into one of the palace dungeons and kept there a close prisoner.

However, Carlo had a few loose coins in his pocket, and he bribed a jailer to take a message to his brothers. When Gaetano learned of Carlo's fate he blew his whistle. His men-at-arms came at the call, and off he went with them to the princess's palace. They surrounded it; and they were so much stronger than her own men that when they threatened to destroy the palace if Carlo was not given up, she submitted. He was

released and he went sulkily home to his village.

His brothers did not go with him. They wanted to get back the purse first. Gaetano demanded to see the princess, and Chekino went into the palace with him, but wrapped in his cloak so that he was invisible.

The princess was surprised to find that the captain of the splendid company was just a plain country youth. She guessed he had some secret similar to that of the owner of the purse, and she began to flatter him.

"I am not at all to blame for Carlo's imprisonment," she declared. "Indeed, it was only when you demanded his release that I discovered his fate. But I must say that he was very presumptuous in asking to marry me. You are quite another kind of man. What a fine troop of men-at-arms you have! Doubtless you have a great palace to house all these warriors."

"I have no palace at all," he responded. "They come and go at my command. Do you see this whistle? I blow it, and there the men are. I blow again and they disappear."

"What a wonderful instrument!" she exclaimed, "May I take it in my hand for a moment?"

Chekino, who was at his brother's elbow unseen, nudged him, but not soon enough to prevent his passing the whistle to her. She blew it. The men-at-arms filled the room.

"Seize him!" she cried. "He is a rebel —a traitor!"

They seized him, for they recognized no one as their commander except the person who held the whistle, and they dragged poor Gaetano down to the lowest dungeon.

The invisible Chekino still remained, and he searched everywhere for the purse, but could not find it. The whistle was in the

princess's hand, and he might easily have taken it had it not been that she was so surrounded by men-at-arms he could not get near her. She was talking to them, admiring their uniforms and their swords and daggers.

Just as he was about to leave the palace, intending to return when the men-at-arms were gone, the princess's maid bumped against him. Then she was so frightened at having bumped against what she could not see that she began to scream.

Chekino tried to pacify her, saying: "Hush, hush! I won't do you any harm."

But the terrified maid ran to tell her mistress that an invisible man was threatening her life.

"Another wonder!" the princess cried, and she ordered all the doors to be locked.

Whenever the palace people heard Chekino moving about they pursued him. He

had to be very quick in climbing on chairs and tables and up bed-posts, and in creeping about on all fours to avoid being caught. At last the princess grew tired of chasing him, and the men-at-arms made so much noise and upset so much furniture that she whistled them away.

She went to her own room, but Chekino entered at the same time. She lay down, and he waited for her to fall asleep. The room was very warm and he imprudently unbuttoned his cloak. It fell apart a little and the princess got a glimpse of him. Instantly she started up, dashed toward him and snatched the cloak off his shoulders.

Alas, poor Chekino! There he stood sadly disconcerted plainly to be seen. When he gathered his wits sufficiently to attempt to regain the cloak the princess had the whistle at her lips. In a moment more the men-at-arms would be there and would cast

him into a dungeon. The whistle sounded and he heard the clink of armor. He waited for nothing more, but leaped out of a window and hurried away, leaving the princess triumphant with the three magic gifts.

XVI

PRINCESS LONGNOSE

Chekino, angry and wretched, wandered into the country. Oh, if he only could wreak vengeance on the false princess! But how? He walked on and on till he grew very hungry. Then some large green figs growing in a deserted garden attracted his attention, and he went in and ate of them heartily. He wondered that he should find any figs whatever, for it was January.

But while his hunger was being appeased something curious was happening to his face. He began to see more and more of his nose. It was growing. Soon it was as long as his arm. A few moments later it touched the ground. The poor fellow was in despair. A fine punishment this for tak-

ing a few figs from a deserted garden! He was ashamed to show himself. So he stayed where he was, lamenting bitterly.

Several hours passed, and hunger assailed him once more. "None of those green figs for me this time!" he said.

In another part of the garden he had seen a tree with small purple figs on it, and he thought they were probably harmless. He supported his nose as well as he could and made his way to where they grew. When he started eating the little purple figs he was amazed to observe that his nose began to shrink, and it kept on shrinking till it reached its normal size. Oh, how relieved he was! Once more he could show himself to the world.

Chekino was a quick-witted fellow, and he took two small baskets that he found in a shed, and filled one with the green figs and the other with the purple figs. Then he dis-

guised himself as an old countryman, hung the basket of green figs on his arm and went into the town where the castle of the princess was.

"Figs for sale!" he cried. "Figs for sale!"

The people came out with pennies in their hands ready to buy. But he said, "Do you think a penny will buy figs in January? No, they can be had only for goldpieces."

He turned his footsteps to the palace and cried under its windows, "Figs for sale! Figs for sale!"

The princess looked out and said: "Figs in January! How astonishing!" And she sent her maid to buy them.

This suited Chekino exactly, and after selling the figs he went away laughing to himself.

Next morning the rumor ran through the town that the princess and some members

of her household were ill of a mysterious malady. Doctors came and went all day long. They looked in their books, and shook heir heads, and gave potions, black, blue, and red. Yet all to no purpose! The princess dared not show herself. Her nose was six feet long. She lay in bed, and her nose stretched far out into the room with a cushion supporting the tip.

Presently a strange doctor came and asked to be allowed to see the sufferers. It was Chekino in disguise. "I have a remedy," he said, "for this new and curious disease."

"Try it on my maid first," the selfish princess ordered. "I will run no risks."

So the doctor went to the maid's room where he found her weeping and wailing over her spoiled beauty. "The remedy is in my hand," he said, "but I must be paid first."

The Doctor With a Cure for Long Noses

"You can have all I possess!" she cried.

"That is not enough," he responded. "Fetch me the purse, the whistle, and the cloak your mistress stole from me and my brothers. That is my fee. Say not a word about us to the princess."

The maid went into her mistress's chamber, sat down by the bedside, and condoled with her.

"Go away! Go away!" the princess said. "This room isn't large enough for our two noses. Be off! I knew that quack could not cure you."

The maid stayed a few moments pretending to arrange the pillows, fumbling the while for the magic gifts, which were hidden in the bed. But she only got the whistle.

She returned to the doctor, gave him the whistle, and told him why she had failed to get more.

"You have done the best you could," the doctor said, "and I will not require further payment from you. Here is the remedy."

Then he gave her some of the purple figs. As soon as she ate them her nose shrank to its usual size. In her glee she danced round the doctor and insisted that he go with her to the room of her mistress.

When the princess saw that her maid was cured she was wild with envy. "Give me the remedy at once!" she cried.

"Payment first," the doctor said. "I can take no risks."

"You can have anything you please," she assured him.

"Then just hand me my cloak and my brother Carlo's purse," he said.

"Oh! it's you, is it?" she groaned. "I might have guessed." The next moment, overcome by anger, she shouted: "I won't! I won't! I won't!"

"You won't?" Chekino said. "Very well!"

He handed the rest of the purple figs to the maid and asked her to give them to the stable-boy who had eaten some of the evil green figs, which had been thrown out of the window. Then he whistled.

The men-at-arms appeared. They surrounded the princess threateningly, and she said petulantly, "Oh, take the things!" at the same time flinging them toward Chekino.

But the next moment she began to flatter him. "I wonder at your treatment of me," she declared. "You know I always admired you more than your brothers. When you have cured me, perhaps you will think me worthy to be your wife. Quick, let me have the remedy. I'm really quite good-looking without this horrid nose."

"Princess," he responded, "the remedy

is all used up. Your stable-boy had the last of it. Hear him shouting with joy below. I bid you farewell. My men-at-arms will release my brother Gaetano, now in your dungeon. If I carry away the three gifts you were in too great a hurry to possess, at least I leave you something in remembrance of my brothers and myself—a nose such as no other princess in the world can boast of."

There it was—six feet of it—and there it stayed. As for the three brothers, they left that region and went to seek fresh adventures elsewhere.

XVII

A FIELD OF RAGWEEDS

One fine day in harvest time Tom Fitzpatrick was taking a ramble through the fields, for it was a holiday and he was not working. As he went along the sunny side of a hedge he heard a clacking sound in the hedge before him.

"Dear me!" he said, "but isn't it surprising to hear a stonechat singing so late in the season?"

He thought a bird of that name made the noise, and he stepped softly along on the tips of his toes hoping to get a sight of it. The noise stopped, but as Tom looked sharply through the bushes, he saw a big brown pitcher, and near it a little tiny

bit of an old man, with a wee cocked hat on his head and wearing a deeshy daushy leather apron.

Beside the pitcher was a small wooden stool. The tiny man stepped up on it, dipped a piggin into the pitcher, took it out full, and put it on the ground close to the stool. Then he sat down on the stool and began hammering away putting a heel on a shoe.

"Well, by the powers!" Tom thought, "I've often heard of fairies, but, to tell the truth, I've never believed in them—and here's one in real earnest. Now if I'm careful, my fortune's made. They say a body must never take his eyes off them or they'll escape."

He stole on a little farther with his eyes fixed on the little man just as a cat watches a mouse. When he got quite near he said, "God bless your work, neighbor."

The little man stopped hammering at the shoe, raised his head, and responded, "Thank you kindly."

"I'm surprised that you should work on a holiday," Tom remarked.

"That's my business, not yours," was the retort.

"Well, maybe you'd be civil enough to tell me what you've got in the pitcher there," Tom said.

"That I will, with pleasure," the little man responded. "It's good ale."

"Ale!" Tom exclaimed. "Thunder and lightning! Where did you get it?"

"Where did I get it?" the little man snorted. "Why, I made it! Yes, and I made it of heath."

"Of heath!" Tom repeated, and burst out laughing. "Sure, you don't think I'm such a fool as to believe that!"

"Believe it or not, as you please," the lit-

tle man said, "but what I tell you is the truth."

"Will you give me a taste of your ale?" Tom asked.

"Young man," the other said, "it would be fitter for you to be looking after your father's property instead of bothering decent quiet people with your foolish questions. Look behind you! While you're idling away your time here there's the cows have broken into the oats and are trampling them all down."

Tom was taken so by surprise that he was on the point of turning around when he recollected himself. Then, lest something similar might happen again, he made a grab at the little man, and caught him in his hand. But in his hurry he upset the pitcher and spilled all the ale, so that he could not get a taste and find out what it was like.

This roused his wrath, and his black looks

frightened the little man very much. In order to soften the youth's anger, the fairy said, "Come along with me a couple of fields off, and I'll show you a crock of gold."

So they went, and Tom kept a tight grip on the fairy and never took his eyes off him, though they had to go through hedges, and cross ditches and a piece of bog. At last they came to a great field full of big bushy ragweeds, and the fairy man pointed to one of them and said, "Dig under that ragweed, and you'll get a crock full of guineas."

To do the digging Tom needed a spade, and he resolved to run home and get one. But first he took off one of his red garters and tied it round the ragweed to make sure that he could find the spot when he came back.

Then he said to the fairy man, "Swear you'll not take my garter away from that ragweed."

The little man at once swore not to touch it, and added very civilly, "I suppose you have no further occasion for me."

"No," Tom responded. "You can go away now, if you please, and may God speed you, and may good luck attend you wherever you go."

"Well, good-by, Tom Fitzpatrick," the fairy man said, "and much good may that gold do you when you get it."

Tom ran home as fast as he could, got a spade, and hurried back to the field of ragweed. But when he got there, behold! a red garter just like his own was tied to every ragweed in the field. As to digging up the entire piece of ground in a search for the right spot, that was out of the question.

So Tom returned home with his spade on his shoulder, a little cooler than he went; and for a long time afterward it made him

scowl with anger whenever he thought of the clever trick the fairy man had played on him.

XVIII

MR. RAM'S ESCAPE

ONE day a tiger who was returning home from hunting met a ram. He had never seen a ram before and was rather alarmed by his shaggy wool and curling horns. So he approached him submissively and said: "Good-day, friend. What may your name be?"

The other struck his breast with his fore-foot and replied in his gruff voice: "I am Mr. Ram. Who are you?"

"Mr. Tiger," was the answer, and then, so overcome with fear that he was more dead than alive, the tiger ran home as fast as he could go.

When he got there, he decided to consult

Mr. Jackal, his nearest neighbor. He went to call on him at once and said: "Friend Jackal, I have just seen a terrible looking fellow with a big thick head that has horns on it. He said his name was Mr. Ram and I ran away so fast that I am quite out of breath, and I am still trembling with fright."

"What a foolish fellow you are to let such a nice piece of flesh escape scot free!" the jackal said. "Tomorrow we will go together and eat that ram."

Next morning the two set off for the ram's hut. He saw them coming over a hill, as he was looking about considering where he should browse that day. In great haste he went to his wife and said: "Our lives are in danger, for Mr. Jackal and Mr. Tiger are both coming against us. What shall we do?"

"Don't be afraid," his wife responded,

and she told him just what to do and say to thwart their enemies.

In accord with her directions he took their child in his arms, and, when the jackal and tiger approached, he pinched it to make it cry as if it were hungry.

No sooner did Mr. Tiger cast his eyes on Mr. Ram than fear again took possession of him, and he wished to turn back. The jackal had provided against this by making Mr. Tiger fast to himself with a leather thong. "Come on!" he said.

Just then Mr. Ram pinched his child again and called out in a loud voice, "You have done well, Friend Jackal, to bring us Mr. Tiger to eat. You hear how my child is crying for food."

These dreadful words were too much for Mr. Tiger, and notwithstanding the entreaties of Mr. Jackal to let him loose, he was too frenzied with fright to do anything but run.

Off he went in the greatest alarm dragging the jackal after him over hill and valley, bumping on rocks, spattering across swamps, scrambling through bushes. He never stopped till he reached home with his friend, the jackal, who was so battered and scratched that he was not more than half alive.

They had no fancy for molesting Mr. Ram after that, and he lived in peace the rest of his days.

XIX

BUILDING A HOUSE

Long ago there was a large handsome stag with great branching horns, who said to himself: "I am tired of having no home of my own and of just living anywhere. I shall build me a house."

He searched on every hill, in every valley, by every stream, and under all the trees for a suitable place. At last he found a place that was just right. It was not too high, nor too low, not too near a stream and not too far away from one, not under trees that shadowed it too much and not away from trees out where the sunshine would be too hot.

"I am going to build my house here," Mr. Stag said, and he began to clear the ground

for it. He worked until late in the day and then went away.

In that same country lived a large handsome tiger, with sharp teeth, and bright, cruel eyes. One day he said to himself: "I am tired of just living around anywhere with no home of my own; I shall build me a house."

Accordingly the tiger searched for a place to build. He searched and searched until at last, about nightfall, he found a place that was just right. It was not too high nor too low, not too near a stream nor too far away from one, not under trees which would shadow it too much nor out in the open sunshine. In fact, it was the same place Mr. Stag had selected.

"I am going to build my house here," Mr. Tiger said. "Most of the underbrush has been cleared away recently, and I can easily

finish the job." He worked all night and at dawn went away.

Soon afterward the stag came back to do more work on his new house. "Hm!" he said when he looked about, "somebody is helping me. The ground is cleared and ready for me to put in the foundation."

At once he set to work and by night the foundation was laid. Then he went away.

A little later the tiger came to work on his new house. "Hm!" he said when he looked about, "somebody is helping me, the foundation is finished."

He went at his task and labored until daybreak. Then he went away leaving the sides of the house completed. On one side was a big door, and on another side was a queer little window.

Presently the stag came back to work on his house. When he saw it he rubbed his eyes, for he thought that he must be dream-

ing. There were the sides of the house with a big door and a queer little window.

"Somebody is certainly helping me," he declared as he began to put on the roof. He worked hard all day, and when the sun went down the dwelling had a roof of dried grass.

"I can sleep in my own house tonight," Mr. Stag said. So he made a bed in a corner, lay down on it, and was soon sound asleep.

About that time Mr. Tiger came to continue his building. He could hardly believe his eyes when he observed that there was a roof of dried grass on it. "Surely somebody is helping me," he said as he went in.

The first thing he saw when he entered the door was the stag sound asleep in his bed in a corner. "Who are you and what are you doing in my house?" he asked in his deepest voice.

The stag awoke with a start. "Who are

you and what are you doing in my house?" he asked in his deepest voice.

"This is not your house," Mr. Tiger growled. "It is mine. I built it myself."

"No, no!" Mr. Stag exclaimed. "This is my house and I built it!"

"I made the clearing for the house," Mr. Tiger declared. "I built the sides and made the door and window."

"But I started the clearing," Mr. Stag said, "and I laid the foundation and put on the roof of dried grass."

The stag and the tiger quarreled all night about whose house it was. When day came they decided that they would live there together.

The next night the tiger said to the stag: "I'm going hunting. Get a kettle of water and have wood ready to make a fire, so we can do some cooking as soon as I return. I shall be almost famished."

Mr. Stag got the wood and water ready, and after a while Mr. Tiger came home, bringing for dinner a big handsome stag he had killed. Mr. Stag had no appetite for such food and he didn't sleep a wink that night.

The next day Mr. Stag said to the tiger: "Now I am going hunting. You have the wood and water ready when I get back."

Mr. Tiger got the wood and water ready, and by and by the stag came back bringing with him the body of a great tiger.

"I am nearly famished," Mr. Stag said. "Let's have dinner right away." But the tiger had no appetite and could not eat a mouthful.

That night neither the tiger nor the stag could sleep a wink. The tiger was afraid the stag would kill him if he shut his eyes for a minute, and the stag was afraid the tiger

would kill him if he slept. So both kept wide awake.

Toward morning the stag got very cramped from keeping motionless in one position. He moved his head a little, and in doing so his antlers struck against the side of the house. The noise this made seemed terribly loud and foreboding to the two sleepless animals. The tiger thought the stag was about to spring on him and kill him. Without a moment's loss of time he leaped through the window and ran away as fast as he could.

This dash of the tiger made Mr. Stag think that he was about to be assaulted, and he jumped out of the door and scud away as fast as his legs would carry him. The tiger and the stag are still running away from each other until this very day.

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